An Unrecorded Early Woodland Cache From Gallia County

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In the course of examining the artifact collection at the Our House Museum in Gallipolis, Gallia County, Ohio, Mrs. Pat Houck, curator of the museum, and I discovered what appears to be the remnants of an Early Woodland cache presumably from Gallia County. The collection consists of 34 stemmed bifacial blades and 6 lanceolate to subtriangular blades (Figs. 1-4), part of the J. M. McCarnes collection which was donated to the museum some time during the 1930s. Except for a few exotic items in the McCarnes collection, the bulk of the labelled material is from the immediate vicinity of Gallipolis; it is extremely probable, therefore, that these stemmed points and lanceolate blades are part of an unrecorded deposit of cache blades found in Gallia County. All are made from identical flint, a drab tan and gray material that is believed to be Delaware chert from the central Scioto valley region.

The blades are carefully numbered, indicating that there may have been as many as 184 in this particular cache. The most interesting feature is the wide variation in the form of the many contracting stem points in the collection. Only two or three of the points could be assigned to the Adena Stemmed or Robbins blade type, notably the one illustrated in Figure 3. This particular point, however, is almost precisely duplicated by a "modified turkey-tail blade" from the Dyer site, Lake County, Indiana (Quimby 1960: 5; Ritzenthaler and Quimby 1962: 263, Fig. 116) found in association with typical Fulton turkey-tail and Harrison turkey-tail forms. Didier (1967) has denominated this particular form the "Herbron" variety. The other stemmed blades in the McCarnes cache cannot be assigned to any of Didier's turkey-tail varieties, though they do resemble others of the "modified turkey-tail" points illustrated by Ritzenthaler and Quimby (1962:249, Fig. 117). In general, they are shorter, with a flat or straight rather than pointed stem base. In these characters they closely fit White's (1968:65) Burkett point type with its "trapeze-shaped" stem. According to White (1968:174), this contracting-stem point is one of "the predominant forms of the Red Ocher and Black Sand phases" of the Illinois valley Early Woodland.

I hesitate even to compare the small sample of lanceolate or elliptical preforms (4) and even smaller sample of triangular preforms (2) to established types. The elliptical points differ from White's (1968:37, Fig. 12) Morton Lanceolate preform type in lacking a straight base. They are very similar to some of the Adena leaf-shaped blades illustrated by Dragoo (1963:108, pl. 37) from the Cresap mound and to several of the blades illustrated by Solecki (1952; pl. 28) from the Natrium mound, but many of the West Virginia preforms have a more rounded, less pointed base. White (1963:34, Fig. 10) has plotted width and length measurements of Ohio Adena preform collections, and the four McCarnes preforms fall nicely within the range of the Early Middle Adena Cresap preforms. The McCarnes specimens also fall well within the limits of Illinois turkey-tail preforms plotted by White, as opposed to the Morton Lanceolate type of preform. It is interesting to note that the McCarnes elliptical preforms retain traces of the striking platform on the base of the blades.

As for the two small, subtriangular preforms, one could compare them to Binford's (1963) Pomranky point type, which has been found in association with typical turkey-tail blades. Both of the McCarnes preforms, however—particularly the more ovate specimen—more closely resemble the smaller of White's Morton Lanceolate type, both in size and shape.

Unfortunately, there must remain some question about the provenience of the McCarnes cache blades, though it is considered very probable that they represent a local find. Someone more familiar with Delaware chert than I am should examine the McCarnes collection to determine whether or not this tentative identification of the lithic material is correct. If the material is indeed a local, Ohio flint, it would do much to substantiate the presumed Gallia County origin of the cache. The granular, predominantly tan and gray chert from which the McCarnes blades are made is quite unlike the high-quality Harrison County, Indiana, gray flint from which most Red Ocher turkey-tail points are made.

These somewhat diverse point and preform types seem to form a consistent suite of

Early Woodland lithic artifacts more closely related to the Red Ocher phase of Indiana and Illinois than to typical Ohio-Kentucky Adena, the similarity of the elliptical McCarnes preforms to Adena preforms notwithstanding. A guess-date of 500-600 B.C. seems a reasonable estimate for the temporal position of the McCarnes cache.

Binford, Lewis R.
1963 Red Ochre caches from the Michigan area: a possible case of cultural drift. *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 19(1):89-108.

Didier, Mary Ellen
1967 A distributional study of the turkey-tail point. *The Wisconsin Archaeologist* 48 (1):3073.

Dragoo, Don W.
1963 Mounds for the dead: an analysis of the Adena culture. *Annals of Carnegie Museum* 37. Pittsburgh.

Quimby, George I.
1960 Burial yields clue to Red Ochre culture. *Chicago Natural History Museum Bulletin* 31(2):5.

Ritzenthaler, Robert E. and George I. Quimby
1962 The Red Ochre culture of the Upper Great Lakes and adjacent areas. *Fieldiana (Anthropology)* 36(11):243-275.

Solecki, Ralph
1953 Exploration of an Adena mound at Natrium, West Virginia. *Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin* 151:313-395. Washington, D.C.

White, Anta Monet
1968 The lithic industries of the Illinois valley in the Early and Middle Woodland period. *Museum of Anthropology, University of Michigan, Anthropological Paper*, No. 35. Ann Arbor.

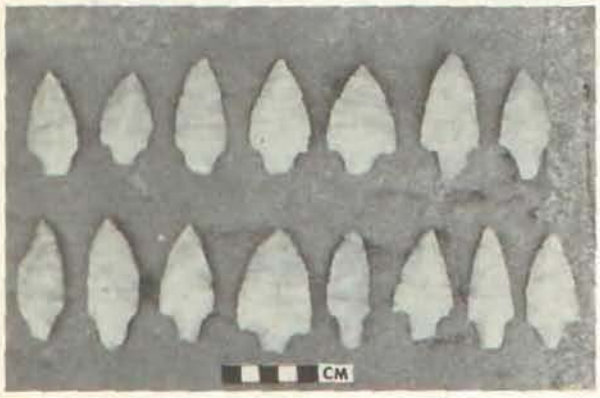

Fig. 1 (Murphy) Stemmed points from the McCarnes cache.

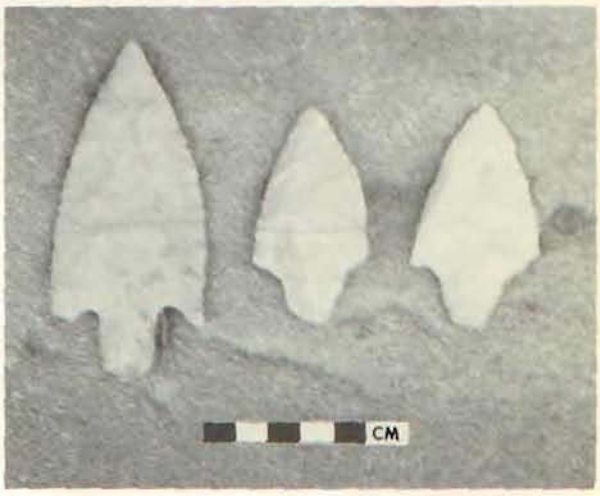

Fig. 3 (Murphy) Stemmed points from the McCarnes cache.

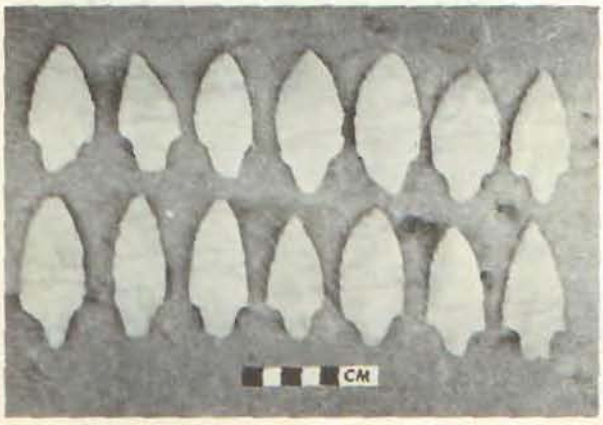

Fig. 2 (Murphy) Stemmed points from the McCarnes cache.

Fig. 4 (Murphy) Lanceolate and subtriangular blades from the McCarnes cache.